Rs. 30,000 on minor irrigation works, provided that proper arrangements could be made and facilities afforded to Government to utilise the allotment fully. Government cannot therefore be blamed for not beginning to spend this year's allotment, viz., Rs. 30,000. I would very much like to spend the money before the end of the year, provided you would enable the Government to do so. I think your remarks in regard to these terms are based upon one or two misapprehensions. You seem to think that Government want to get interest on the expenditure they make. The intention of Government is to spend Rs. 30,000 and they expect the ryots to make a contribution and Government are willing to advance the latter sum as a loan so as to avoid delay in the execution of the works. The Government are also willing to get back the advance money in instalments. It is on this advance that Government propose to charge interest. It is an advance similar in character to advances under the Agricultural Loans Regulation. No interest will be charged on the portion which the State proposes to contribute as its share towards the restoration of these tanks. I hope I have made myself quite clear. I do not think it unreasonable on the part of Government to expect interest on the amount which they advance and which they can realise only in the course of ten years.

You next spoke of a water cess. It is not a water cess. It is the charge for maintenance. Water cess is the payment for the water which we give. Here it is a case which I propose to take from the ryots for absolving them from the duty of maintaining these minor irrigation works. Section 13 of the Irrigation Regulation says that "when any minor irrigation work has been constructed or completely restored or repaired at the cost, wholly or partly, of Government, it shall be the duty of the proprietors of the lands benefited by such work to maintain it, that is, to keep it at the level of efficiency at which it was when the construction, restoration or repair was completed". What I said was that it might not be easy for the ryots to combine to keep the work in that level of efficiency always. That is why all these works have deteriorated. I do not for a moment deny the indifference of the Government. But the ryots have also been indifferent and they have not combined. I have therefore made the proposal that, if you pay so much per acre, it will be the duty of Government to keep all these works in a state of efficiency and I distinctly remember having also said so to the gentlemen that attended the conference at Kuzhithura. If you can form an Irrigation Board, you can take back the money and attend to the efficient maintenance of the works yourselves. I shall be glad if you can conduct such repairs and maintenance yourselves. The arrangement detailed above is purely of a contractual nature and the provisions of the Irrigation Regulation will be examined with a view to see in what respects they stand in need of amendment so as to make this proposal workable. Then there is another point that I have to advert to. You have been quoting figures of expenditure on minor Irrigation works. The figure for 1096 is Rs. 18,000. This is, no doubt, very disappointing. But I must tell the House that we should have spent more, at least Rs. 30,000 or Rs. 40,000, had I not taken steps to suspend the expenditure in the Shencottah taluk, where I found that these works were being carried out in pursuance of an aimless and haphazard programme. I would assure you that minor irrigation has my entire sympathy, and I shall try to spend as much as possible on that account.

60. Opening of a road from Kuzhivila to Tutturtura in South Travancore.

Mr. K. Hussian Pillai (Member, Nominated) spoke about the necessity for opening a cart road from Kuzhivila near Kaliakkavila in Ezhudesapattu *pakuthi*, Vilavankod taluk, to Tutturtura *via* Nambukali and said that the petitions presented by the villagers during the past 40 years bore no fruit. He observed that the road would, if constructed, be of great use to the people of Kuzhivila, Pudukkada, Koravankode, Kirattur, Vaikattur, Puttura, Elavantura, Tutturtura and several other places. The absence of the road was very keenly felt by the people, especially in the rainy season, when they found it difficult to transport even bare necessaries to their houses. Further, there were numerous temples, mosques, churches and schools in the locality which would be benefited by the proposed road. According to the Member the revenue from the locality

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which would be benefited by the proposed road was one lakh of rupees. The road was only 4 miles ong; much land had not to be acquired, as the road would mainly pass through *poramboke* lands and a small road had already been opened by the people; and all that was necessary for the Government to do was to make it cartable and fit for traffic.

Dewan's reply.—The people have now cut a 12 ft. road. The question of taking up similar roads and improving them is under consideration. When the question is settled, this road will also be considered.

61. Deplorable condition of the village roads and traces in the Neyattinkara taluk and some suggestions for their improvement.

Mr. N. K. Padmanabha Pillai (Member, Neyattinkara Taluk) began by saying that he made representations at the seventeenth session of the Assembly in regard to the improvement of some of the important roads and traces in the Neyattinkara taluk, but that the works still remained unattended to. He said that the repairs to Amaravila-Ottassekharamangalam road, and the trace from the 5th mile, M. S. road, to the 3d mile, Balaramapuram-Kattakada road, were urgent.

The first-mentioned road was 9 miles in length and it connected 20 congested villages. It was the only road leading to the town and there were several departmental and aided vernacular schools, two Proverti Cutcherries, one police outpost and two important markets within the area covered by it. Since 3 small bridges and half a dozen culverts had not been constructed, the road was practically useless for a large part of the year. The Member added that it was too much for the people to undertake the work and requested that the Public Works Department might be directed to take it up at an early date. As for the trace referred to, it was only $4\frac{3}{4}$ miles long; the 3rd mile of it passed through paddy fields and joined the Ooruttambalam road; and the trace required widening and improving. At the Valianathara paddy fields which were only 50 yards long the trace ended abruptly and re-appeared from the other end of the *ela*. The Member prayed that the trace itself might be made continuous and converted into a cart road with two culverts at that place. The trace was originally made by the people and taken up by the P. W. D. for maintenance, and, if improved, it would be of considerable benefit to the villagers of Pallichal, Nemam and the adjoining villages.

The Member observed that, in reply to his representation last year, the Dewan had stated that Government would attend to such works as required the services of an expert and pointed out that these two works required the services of an expert. Though orders had been issued for the preparation of estimates for the construction of the necessary bridges and culverts on the Amaravila-Ottassekharamangalam road, it was not known whether anything further had been done in pursuance of those orders.

In conclusion, the Member said that the matter had been repeatedly represented at the previous sessions of the Assembly and that he had only to remind the Government that it could not brook further delay.

Dewan's reply.—The estimate is under preparation in regard to Amaravila-Ottassekharamangalam road. No estimate has yet been prepared in regard to the other road, viz., the Nemam-Ooruttambalam trace. Inasmuch as the trace has been taken over for maintenance, I think the P. W. D. is bound to improve and maintain it. I shall ask the Chief Engineer to have an estimate for the work prepared in the next two months and carry out the work in 1098.

62. Need for improving irrigation in the Neyattinkara Taluk.

Mr. S. J. Williams (Member, Neyattinkara Taluk) stated that, though Neyattinkara is one of the biggest taluks of the State with an area of 233 square miles and very thickly populated, it was one of the most poorly provided in point of irrigation. From the time of the last Settlement up to 1921, the paddy fields underwent a reduction from 14,819 acres to 14,143 acres, 676 acres having evidently become silted

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